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Senior Recital: Karen Adam, piano

Department of Music, University of Richmond

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SENIOR RECITAL
Karen Adam, piano

APRIL 29, 2006, 4:00 PM
PERKINSON RECITAL HALL

PROGRAM

Prelude and Fugue in G Minor,
from the Well-Tempered Clavier Book II

J.S. Bach
(1685-1750)

Sonata in B-flat Major, D. 960

Franz Schubert
(1797-1828)

I. Molto moderato
II. Andante sostenuto
III. Scherzo: Allegro vivace
con delicatezza
IV. Allegro ma non troppo

INTERMISSION

Litany

Toru Takemitsu
(1930-1996)

I. Adagio
II. Lento misterioso

Humoresque in G Major, Op. 10, No. 5

Sergei Rachmaninoff
(1873-1943)

Chappelle de Guillaume Tell,
from *Années de Pèlerinage*,
Première année: Suisse

Franz Liszt
(1811-1886)

“...being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.”

~Philippians 1:6, NIV

Karen Adam is a senior music major at the University of Richmond. Currently in her sixteenth year of music making, she has studied with Dr. Joanne Kong and Richard Becker at the University of Richmond. She made her concerto debut in 2003 with the Richmond Symphony Orchestra and has performed in numerous competitions and recitals throughout central Virginia. She has participated in master classes led by Leon Fleisher, Emanuel Ax, Paul Badura-Skoda, Lydia Artymiw, and others.

In addition to her work as a soloist, Karen performs piano and harpsichord with the University of Richmond Chamber Ensembles, and piano, celeste, and synthesizer with the University Band. As a member of these ensembles, Karen receives instruction from the University's ensemble-in-residence, eighth blackbird, and other faculty members.

Karen is a member of the University of Richmond's Music Honorary, Phi Kappa Mu. Outside of her studies at the University of Richmond, she teaches private piano lessons and serves as her church's accompanist on piano and organ. She will graduate this May with a Bachelor of Arts degree in music, with a concentration in piano performance-literature and a minor in law and the liberal arts.

PROGRAM NOTES

Between the two volumes of *The Well-Tempered Clavier*, J.S. Bach composed a total of forty-eight preludes and fugues—two in each major and minor key. Originally performed on harpsichord, clavichord, or organ, *The Well-Tempered Clavier* showcased the newly-developed method of even-temperament tuning, which made it possible for keyboard music to be consonant in any key.¹ The *Prelude and Fugue in G Minor* is the sixteenth of the twenty-four preludes and fugues in *The Well-Tempered Clavier, Book II*. The Prelude is an example of the French Overture style of writing, in which a stately theme is framed by dotted rhythms. The Fugue opens with an enigmatic subject. To this theme, Bach gradually adds three other voices. The subject remains omnipresent for the remainder of the Fugue with the exception of three brief episodic passages in which Bach includes non-thematic material.

Franz Schubert finished his *Sonata in B-flat Major, D. 960* two months before his death in 1828. It was the last, and perhaps one of the greatest, piano sonatas he composed. Each of the four movements contains a distinct theme with Schubert's trademark lyricism and extensive melodic lines. While he built this Sonata on the foundations of classical sonata-allegro form, the details within Schubert's construction exhibit a freedom indicative of his position between the Classical and Romantic eras. Besides his signature melodies, perhaps one of the most striking liberties present in this Sonata is Schubert's use of key relationships. The exposition of the first movement, for example, is written in five different key areas, while typical sonata-allegro form expositions only contain two. Schubert's willingness to extend the limits of classical constructs gained him scant recognition during his lifetime, but has since earned the praise of musicians and audiences alike.

¹ *The New Grove Dictionary of Music, 2nd edition*. s.v. "Bach, Johann Sebastian."

Japanese composer Toru Takemitsu first heard Western music in Japan during World War II. At the age of sixteen, he decided to become a composer. While he modeled his early works after composers such as Debussy and Messiaen, he ultimately achieved a style that demonstrated a synthesis of Eastern and Western musical qualities. He wrote *Litany* in 1990 to commemorate the life of Michael Vyner, artistic director of the London Sinfonietta.² Takemitsu based the piece on a previous composition, *Lento in due movimenti* (1950), whose manuscript he had lost. The resulting *Litany* is what Takemitsu identified as a “recomposition from memory”.³ Its mournful and commemorative character is highlighted in both movements’ sudden changes in dynamics, tempo, and texture.

Humoresque in G Major, Op. 10, No. 5 is part of a seven-piece set of salon music that Rachmaninoff composed between 1893 and 1894.⁴ The term *humoresque* was coined by Robert Schumann in the mid 1800s and is derived from the medieval theory that humans consist of four elements (or humors): black bile, yellow bile, blood, and phlegm.⁵ Rachmaninoff’s composition is typical of Romantic humoresques. He depicts the four humors, which represent despondency, happiness, irritability, and lethargy,⁶ via contrasting musical sections that include strong rhythmic motives, sharp dynamic contrast, a contemplative melody, and varying musical textures.

² Davies, Peter Maxwell. “Threnody on a Plainsong for Michael Vyner,” *Chester Music & Novello & Co.* (London: 2006.) [Online] available from http://www.chesternovello.com/default.aspx?TabId=2432&State_2907=2&WorkId_2907=8377 ; accessed 29 Mar. 2006; Internet.

³ Burt, Peter. *The Music of Toru Takemitsu* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 28-33.

⁴ *The New Grove Dictionary of Music*, 2nd edition. s.v. “Rachmaninoff, Serge.”

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ *Random House Unabridged Dictionary*, 2nd edition. s.v. “humor.”

From *Années de Pèlerinage (Years of Pilgrimage)*, *Chappelle de Guillaume Tell (William Tell's Chapel)* marks Liszt's travels through Switzerland. Liszt first sojourned to Switzerland in the summer of 1835 and spent several months touring the country.⁷ *Chappelle de Guillaume Tell* was inspired by the story of the Swiss hero William Tell and the chapel to which he escaped after being captured by the Austrian bailiff, Gessler.⁸ Liszt's piece is composed in ternary form. It opens with a brief introduction, then centers on a theme based on the three notes of the C-major triad. A developmental section follows with increasing chromaticism until the theme returns. After the theme's final appearance, Liszt adds a codetta-like passage which incorporates elements from both the exposition and developmental sections to conclude the piece.

⁷ Watson, Derek. *Master Musicians: Liszt* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 32-36.

⁸Columbia Encyclopedia, s.v. "Tell, William." [Online] available from <http://www.encyclopedia.com>; accessed 26 Feb. 2006; Internet.

Many thanks to all who are present today and to numerous others who continually offer their encouragement, instruction, friendship, and support. It is my joy to spend this time with you. In the words of Johann Sebastian Bach, "'*Soli Deo Gloria*'—to God alone, the glory".⁹

⁹ Schoenberg, Harold C. *The Lives of the Great Composers, 3rd edition* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1997), 50.